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STUDIES IN THE PSALMS

PART I

By SAMUEL DAICHES, Ph.D.
LECTURER IN BIBLICAL EXEGESIS
JEWS' COLLEGE

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To Mr. Gurt Mowl
with best wishes
from the Author.

12. 8. 30.

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STUDIES IN THE PSALMS

THE MEANING OF אדם, בן אדם AND KINDRED TERMS

PART I

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TO
THE MEMORY OF
MY MOTHER
ז״ל

PREFACE

In December 1927 I read a paper before the Society for Old Testament Study, in which I endeavoured to show that אדם, בן אדם had, in many parts of the Bible, especially in the Psalms, a meaning which has not yet been recognized; and that that meaning was, 'man of wealth', 'man of position', very often with the connotation of 'wicked'. The treatment of the subject in the paper was, naturally, short and sketchy. It is my intention to elaborate the subject fully, and for the present I submit the results of my investigation on the meaning of those and kindred terms in a portion of the Psalms.

SAMUEL DAICHES.

November 28, 1929.

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I

THE MEANING OF אדם, בן אדם, בני אדם

1. The general meaning of אדם in the Bible is 'man', 'human being'. אדם also signifies 'the human species', 'mankind' (as distinguished from בהמה 'beast'). The first man was called אדם denoting both 'man' and 'the human species'. See Old Testament Dictionaries. בן אדם, in the plural בני אדם, is used in the same sense as אדם. But there are many passages in the Bible in which אדם does not mean 'human species' and signifies more than only 'man'. Let me take as an illustration *Psalm 49, v. 3.* The first half of that verse consists of the words גם בני אדם גם בני איש. The Authorized Version translates these words by 'Both low and high'. בני אדם are thus rendered by 'low' and בני איש by 'high'. Briggs, *International Critical Commentary*: *Book of Psalms*, vol. i, paraphrases בני אדם by 'the common people' (p. 407), and explains (p. 412) בני אדם as 'men of low degree', 'common men', and בני איש as 'men of high degree, of position and influence'; see also Briggs, *op. cit.*, p. 33. Franz Delitzsch, *Die Psalmen*, 5th edition (1894), gives the same explanation; see p. 356: 'בני אדם Kinder gemeiner Leute', and p. 85: 'Im Gegensatz zu בני אדם Menschen, welche in der Menge verschwinden, bezeichnen בני איש Männer, welche aus ihr hervorragen.' Baethgen, *Die Psalmen*, 3rd ed. (1904), p. 141, translates 'So Leute wie auch Herren,' and comments: 'Im Syrischen sind בני נשא (= בני אדם) die gemeinen Leute, בני איש sind dann die Vornehmen.' Kittel, *Die Psalmen* (1914), p. 195, translates 'gemeine Leute sowohl als Herren'. Gunkel, *Die Psalmen* (1926), translates (p. 208) 'Kinder des Volkes und Herrensöhne', and comments (on p. 210): 'בני איש Vornehme, vgl. zu ψ 4_3; im

Gegensatz dazu sind die בני אדם das gemeine Volk' (following Baethgen). Ibn-Ezra comments on this half-verse: בני אדם שאין להם מעלה או שיש להם שהם נודעים וזה טעם ובני איש. 'בני אדם (are people) who have no degree (or high status in life), or (people) who have (a high status in life) and are known,and this is the meaning of 'ובני איש (I.-E. uses here ו for גם). On Isaiah ch. 2, v. 9[a] וישח אדם וישפל איש Rashi comments: וישח אדם, הקטנים; וישפל איש, הגדולים. 'אדם (are) the small, איש—the great (people)'. Ḳimḥi says: ויש מפרשים אדם הקטנים, איש הגדולים. Targum translates וְיִמְאַךְ אֱנָשָׁא וְיֶחֱלַשׁ תְּקוֹף גַּבְרִין 'And the weak (humble) man will be brought low and the strong man (literally: the strength of men) will become weak.' Cf. the Revised Version: 'And the mean man is bowed down, and the great man is brought low.'

The important point for the moment is that אדם, as well as בן אדם and בני אדם, means more than only 'man' or 'mankind'.

My researches have led me to the view that in many passages in the Bible אדם, and בן אדם, denotes 'a man of a high social position', 'a man of possessions', often especially 'an owner of landed property', 'an aristocrat', and that בני אדם often means 'the rich', 'the noble', 'the mighty'. I have also come to the conclusion that in the Book of Psalms בני אדם and בן אדם, אדם have, in practically all the passages in which these words occur, the meaning just suggested with the added notion of 'wicked'. בני אדם in the Psalms, therefore, means nearly throughout 'the wicked rich', 'the wicked noble', 'the wicked mighty'.

I shall deal first with the Book of Psalms. As I observed in the Preface, I shall deal in this essay with a portion of the Psalms.

2. בן אדם occurs for the first time in the Book of Psalms in *Psalm 8, v. 5.* מה אנוש כי תזכרנו ובן אדם כי תפקדנו 'What is man, that Thou art mindful of him, and the son of man,

that Thou visitest him?' I will not comment on this verse for the present. Later we shall see that even in this verse בן אדם may have the meaning of 'superior man'.

Psalm 11.

3. בני אדם occurs for the first time in *Psalm 11, v. 4.* The verse reads: ה' בהיכל קדשו ה' בשמים כסאו עיניו יחזו עפעפיו יבחנו בני אדם. בני אדם has here, I suggest, the meaning of 'wealthy, mighty men', who are evil-doers. בני אדם in this verse are identical with הרשעים in v. 2 and רשעים in v. 6, and with רשע and אהב חמס in v. 5. The wicked prepare for their dark deeds (v. 2). But God in heaven sees what is going on. 'His eyes behold, His eyelids try (search) the בני אדם, the wicked men of power, the mighty evil-doers'. V. 5 (ה' צדיק יבחן ורשע ואהב חמס שנאה נפשו) I translate as follows: 'God the righteous tries (the wicked men), and the wicked and him that loveth violence His soul hateth.' The suggested reading יבחן צדיק ורשע (see Kittel, *Biblia Hebraica*) is thus unnecessary. Many other emendations (see, e.g., Gunkel, *op. cit.*, p. 40, and pp. 42–3) fall away. צדיק refers to God. Cf. v. 7: כי צדיק ה' צדקות אהב 'For the Lord is righteous, He loveth righteousness.' The transition from the first half of this Psalm to the second half is contained in v. 3^{b}. צדיק מה פעל refers, I suggest, to God, and not to the righteous man, whence the difficulties in the commentaries; see Gunkel, *op. cit.*, p. 42. See also *Midrash Tehillim* (*Shocher Tob*), ed. S. Buber, p. 98: צדיק העולם מה פעולות פעלת לפועלי מצות; see also Chajes, Hebrew Commentary on the Psalms, p. 22. We have thus also a Rabbinic tradition that צדיק מה פעל refers to God. The faint-hearted ask: 'What has the Righteous One done (for the discomfiture of the wicked and the protection of the upright)'? The answer of the Psalmist is: God in heaven looks at the wicked people upon earth and tries them (v. 5) and punishes them (v. 6). V. 7 emphasizes the righteous character of God. כי צדיק ה' צדקות אהב

'For righteous is the Lord; righteousness (or, righteous deeds) He loveth.' 7^b (ישר יחזו פנימו) is to be translated: 'the upright sees His face', i.e. God causes the light of His countenance to shine upon the upright. There seems to be in these three words an allusion (by way of contrast) to the last five words in v. 2 (לירות במו אפל לישרי לב). Or does ישר mean 'what is upright' = 'uprightness'? Cf. the translation of LXX: *εὐθύτητα εἶδε τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ* 'his face beholds uprightness'. In Psalm 7, v. 10^b and v. 12, God is called צדיק (ובחן לבות וכליות אלהים צדיק; אלהים שופט צדיק).

Psalm 12.

4. *Psalm 12* is directed against the בני אדם. It is evident that in this Psalm בני אדם cannot mean simply 'the children of men' or 'the common people'. The עניים and אביונים are also included in 'the children of men' or in 'the common people'. In this Psalm בני אדם denotes those who are contrasted with the poor and needy, namely the men of possession, the rich and mighty, whose wickedness and rapaciousness cause the Psalmist to pray to God for help. V. 2: הושיעה ה׳ כי גמר חסיד כי פסו אמונים מבני אדם, 'Help, O Lord, for the godly man has ceased, for the faithful have failed from among the בני אדם, i.e. the men of substance and power.' The בני אדם are faithless and wicked. They speak lies and vain things (vv. 3, 4). They think that they are the masters of everything (מי אדון לנו 'who is lord over us?', v. 5). They rob the poor (עניים) and oppress the needy (אביונים), v. 6^a. But God rises against the בני אדם: עתה אקום יאמר ה׳. The last four words of v. 6, I submit, have been misunderstood by the commentators. I explain אשית בישע יפיח לו as follows. יפיח לו has been much commented upon and much emended. The explanation of יפיח לו seems to me to be simple. יפיח לו does not mean 'at whom they puff' (R. V.). Nor has it any of the meanings enumerated by Gunkel, in *op. cit.*, p. 45. יפיח לו means: 'he (God) speaks unto himself'. לו is *dativus ethicus*. יפיח 'he speaks' is

used several times in Proverbs: ch. 6, v. 19; ch. 12, v. 17; ch. 14, vv. 5, 25; ch. 19, vv. 5, 9. That יפיח 'he speaks' is also used with regard to speaking good things is shown by Proverbs ch. 12, v. 17: יפיח אמונה יגיד צדק 'He that speaketh truth sheweth forth righteousness.' For הפיח 'to speak', see Barth, *ES.* 24; see also Gesenius' *HWB.*, 17th edition (1921), p. 636. יפיח לו is parallel to יאמר ה'. אשית בישע means 'I will put in salvation', i.e. 'I will bring salvation', namely to the oppressed. The object, though not stated in the text, is understood. אשית בישע is parallel to עתה אקום.

V. 7 says that the words of God are pure and true. The Lord will thus bring the salvation which He promises.

5. V. 8 has given trouble to commentators. This verse, it seems to me, is to be explained as follows. שמר is used here in the sense of 'to watch', i.e. 'to watch the wicked people and to see that they do no harm'. נצר is used in the same sense with the additional meaning of 'keeping them away' from the righteous poor, so that they could not injure them. Both the plural of תשמרם and the singular of תצרנו (תצרֶנּו is right!) refer to the wicked men. תצרנו refers to each wicked man; cf. Psalm 14, v. 1[a] (singular) and v. 1[b] (plural). For שמר 'to guard', 'to watch' in an evil sense, see Job ch. 10, v. 14 (אם חטאתי ושמרתני); ch. 13, v. 27 (ותשם בסד רגלי ותשמור כל ארחתי); ch. 33, v. 11 (ישם בסד רגלי); Psalm 56, v. 7 (יגורו יצפונו המה עקבי ישמרו); Psalm 71, v. 10 (ושמרי נפשי נועצו יחדו). Cf. also Psalm 17, v. 4 (אני שמרתי ארחות פריץ), and see later. Cf. also 2 Samuel ch. 11, v. 16; 2 Kings ch. 9, v. 14. For נצר 'to watch' in a hostile sense, see Isaiah ch. 1, v. 8; Jeremiah ch. 4, v. 16. הדור does not refer to the wicked, but to the righteous people. It does not mean 'the godless generation' (as it is usually understood), but the righteous generation. דור is often used in the Psalms in the good sense. Cf. Psalm 14, v. 5 (כי אלהים בדור צדיק); Psalm 24, v. 6 (זה דור דרשיו); Psalm 45, v. 18 (אזכירה שמך בכל דר ודר); Psalm 112, v. 2 (דור ישרים יברך); Psalm 145, v. 4

(דור לדור ישבח מעשיך). The translation of v. 8 would then be as follows: 'Thou, O Lord, shalt watch them, Thou shalt guard them (literally: 'him') (and keep them—the wicked people—away) from this (righteous) generation for ever.' All the emendations (see Gunkel, *op. cit.*, p. 45) fall away. How זו לעולם can be turned into זוֹלֵל וְעַוָּל (see Gunkel's translation on p. 43 and his notes on p. 45, where he quotes approvingly this 'excellent'—'vortrefflich'—emendation suggested by Budde, Staerk and others) passes my comprehension. Or did these commentators have in mind the observations of Rashi on v. 9? How curious!

And v. 9 receives now a fuller meaning. סביב רשעים יתהלכון כרם זלות לבני אדם I translate: 'Round about the wicked walk, when vileness is high up among the בני אדם, i.e. among the godless powerful men.' סביב יתהלכון fits in so well. The wicked walk round about and would like to come near them and injure them (cf. Rashi!). But God watches them and keeps them away from the righteous men, and thus renders the wicked harmless. All the emendations vanish (see especially Baethgen, *op. cit.*, p. 34, and Gunkel, *op. cit.*, p. 45), and the text becomes perfectly clear.

Psalm 14.

6. *Psalm 14* also speaks against the בני אדם. V. 2: ה' משמים השקיף על בני אדם לראות היש משכיל דרש את אלהים 'The Lord looked down from heaven upon the בני אדם (i.e. upon the highly placed men) to see if there were any that did understand, that did seek after God.' They are all bad. V. 3: הכל סר יחדו נאלחו אין עשה טוב אין גם אחד 'They are all gone aside, they are together become impure, there is none that doeth good, not one.' They are all wicked fools (v. 1; note: נבל in the singular, השחיתו התעיבו in the plural). They eat up the people (v. 4). The בני אדם are the aristocratic class, the highly placed men, and instead of doing good to the people, they oppress and grind them. Cf. Micah ch. 3, v. 3: ואשר אכלו שאר עמי ועורם מעליהם הפשיטו ואת עצמותיהם פצחו ופרשו

כאשר בסיר וכבשר בתוך קלחת 'Who eat the flesh of my people, and flay their skin from off them, and break their bones; yea, they chop them in pieces, as that which is in the pot, and as flesh within the caldron.' It is the leaders of the people who do this, 'the heads of Jacob and rulers of the house of Israel' (Micah ch. 3, v. 1). For the phrase 'to eat' in the sense of devouring people, see Numbers ch. 24, v. 8; Isaiah ch. 9, v. 11; Jeremiah ch. 2, v. 3; ch. 10, v. 25; ch. 30, v. 16; ch. 50, v. 7; Ezekiel ch. 5, v. 10; ch. 36, vv. 13, 14; Hosea ch. 7, v. 7. See also Habakkuk ch. 3, v. 14^{b}: עליצתם כמו לאכל עני במסתר 'their rejoicing was as to devour the poor secretly'; Zechariah ch. 11, v. 9; Proverbs ch. 30, v. 14. Cf. also Habakkuk ch. 1, v. 13^{b} (למה תביט בוגדים תחריש בבלע רשע צדיק ממנו). The idea of the leaders becoming the oppressors is well elaborated in Ezekiel ch. 34. Cf. v. 10: כה אמר ד' ה' הנני אל הרעים ודרשתי את צאני מידם והשבתים מרעות צאן ולא ירעו עוד הרעים אתם והצלתי צאני מפיהם ולא תהיין להם לאכלה 'Thus saith the Lord God: Behold, I am against the shepherds; and I will require my sheep at their hand, and cause them to cease from feeding the sheep; neither shall the shepherds feed themselves any more; and I will deliver my sheep from their mouth that they may not be food for them.'

7. V. 4 has offered difficulties to commentators, and no satisfactory explanation of this verse has as yet been given. The translation of the Authorized and Revised Versions and other translations give no satisfactory sense. I propose the following explanation of this verse. The verse reads: הלא ידעו כל פעלי און אכלי עמי אכלו לחם ה' לא קראו. I suggest that פעלי און are *not* identical with the אכלי עמי. The אכלי עמי are the בני אדם. But they are not the פעלי און. The פעלי און are 'the workers of iniquity' as distinguished from the בני אדם who are the אכלי עמי. כל פעלי און are 'all the workers of iniquity', the well-known wicked people who know the ways of the בני אדם. Whether the theory of Mowinckel (*Psalmen-*

studien, I) regarding און and פעלי און is right or not,[1] the פעלי און were avowed evil-doers, well-known wicked men. And they knew the evil ways of the בני אדם. It is just as if we would say to-day: Ask the men of the under-world, and they will tell you that certain men, who are prominent as leaders in society, are known to lead bad lives and are in fact wicked men. In the same way the Psalmist says that all the פעלי און know how wicked the בני אדם are. And he gives one instance: they know that the בני אדם eat bread without calling upon God. At the same time 'the eating of bread' brings to the mind of the Psalmist also the fact that they 'eat the people'. Hence the juxtaposition of אכלי עמי and אכלו לחם. They sit down at banquets, eat and drink and forget God. The righteous man takes his food in humbleness and praises God. Not so the wicked nobles. They enjoy the pleasures of life, and God is far from their mind. This thought is perhaps also implied in Psalm 10, v. 3; cf. *Midrash Tehillim*, p. 94, and note 21, ibid. Cf. Job ch. 1, v. 5^b כי אמר איוב אולי חטאו בני וברכו אלהים בלבבם. Cf. also Amos ch. 6, vv. 4–6. The Psalmist also thinks of the fact that the בני אדם 'eat bread' and can indulge in pleasures because they rob the poor and oppress the righteous. All this, it seems to me, is contained in the words אכלי עמי אכלו לחם ה' לא קראו. הלא has the meaning of 'behold'; cf. Proverbs ch. 8, v, 1; ch. 14, v. 22, and see Gesenius' *HWB.*, 17th ed., p. 374. The translation of this verse would then be as follows: 'Behold, all the workers of iniquity know that they who eat my people eat bread and call not upon the Lord.' This translation, I submit, gives a satisfactory sense.

V. 5 is clear. It *may* be that שם alludes to אכלו לחם, to the banquets at which the בני אדם are suddenly frightened by the thought of the existence of God and of God being with the righteous. The righteous are the poor whom they oppress. The צדיק (v. 5) is the עני (v. 6). V. 6 is

[1] I hope to deal with Mowinckel's theory in my next essay.

ironical: 'Ye put to shame (ye disregard) the counsel of the poor because the Lord is his refuge!' But, the Psalmist supplements in his thought, God is the best, the only refuge, and in the end you, בני אדם, will be put to shame. Thus the whole Psalm is, I submit, satisfactorily explained.[1]

Psalm 15.

8. In *Psalm 15* the phrase בני אדם does not occur. But the Psalmist had the בני אדם in his mind when he pictured the ideal conduct of life. It is such a conduct of life, the Psalmist thinks, as is not to be found among the בני אדם. Although the בני אדם are mentioned for the first time in Psalm 11, they are thought and spoken of also in the preceding Psalms. The רשעים, צררי, רדפי of Psalm 7, the אויבי, רשעים of Psalm 9, the רשע of Psalm 10 are the בני אדם. In any case, the בני אדם are amongst them. The same applies to רשעים, איבי, רבבות עם, צרי in Psalm 3, דברי כזב in Psalm 5, איש דמים ומרמה in Psalm 6, כל איבי. It also applies to Psalm 1. The contrast is between the men in high positions with large possessions, who abuse both their position and their wealth and are wicked, and men who are in a humble state of life, sometimes poor and perhaps even destitute, but are good and righteous. Poverty is not an ideal with the Psalmist; see Psalm 1, v. 3. As a matter of fact, the man of substance can practise virtue in a more effective way (see Psalm 15, v. 5; one must have money in order not to give it in usury). But the Psalmist has observed that the rich were

[1] Chajes, who makes many fine observations in his Commentary on the Psalms, in commenting on v. 2, says: בני אדם לאו דוקא, ומשמעו האנשים, אשר עיני הדור נשואות אליהם, העומדים ברומו של עולמם, וביניהם לא ימצא הולך תמים 'It does not mean exactly "common people"; it means "the people, to whom the eyes of the generation are raised, who stand on the height of their world, and among them is not to be found an upright man."' Chajes made this comment because he had in mind the usual interpretation of בני אדם. According to my interpretation the phrase בני אדם is used advisedly. In Hebrew I would say בני אדם דוקא.

arrogant and wicked and the poor were humble and righteous. In the very first Psalm the Psalmist warns the ordinary man against the ways of the רשעים. The ordinary man should not be attracted by the outward prosperity of the wicked. They are 'like the chaff which the wind driveth away'. איש is the ordinary man, the average man. איש is also the humble, the lowly man. The Psalmist therefore, says: אשרי האיש. The אדם is, in the mind of the Psalmist, a רשע. The בני איש are, as a rule, the צדיקים. The בני אדם are, as a rule, the רשעים. This contrast already exists in Psalm 1. With Psalm 2 I shall deal fully later. At present I shall pass on.

Psalm 4.

9. In *Psalm 4* the Psalmist addresses the humble men, not the highly placed men. All the difficulties in the interpretation of this Psalm result from the view that the בני איש are the rich men and that the Psalmist speaks against these men, who are his enemies (see Baethgen, *op. cit.*, pp. 9–10; Kittel, *op. cit.*, p. 15; Gunkel, *op. cit.*, p. 16, and other commentaries). בני איש are the ordinary, the humble men. There is not a word in the Psalm about wicked men or enemies or about the Psalmist's fear of them (in contrast to Psalm 3 and Psalm 5). In Psalm 4 the Psalmist speaks to the people of his own class, to his friends. The ordinary people have sometimes also to be admonished. In Psalm 1 the Psalmist holds the torch to the ordinary man (אשרי האיש), so as to show him which is the right path, which is the way of the righteous and which is the road of the wicked. In Psalm 4 the Psalmist tells the ordinary men, the בני איש, that they should not love vanity and should not seek after falsehood. If they will, however, do that, he tells them, his honour will be turned into shame. His honour is bound up with the honour of his friends, the בני איש. It may be that כבודי לכלמה is a parenthetic exclamation. The translation of

v. 3 would then be: 'Humble men, how long—my honour is turned into shame!—will you love vanity, seek after falsehood? Selah.' The emendations suggested for כבודי לכלמה become unnecessary. The style in the Psalms is sometimes what we call 'popular'. In v. 4 the Psalmist tells the בני איש that God has set apart (chosen) the pious man unto himself[1] and that He will hear when he (the Psalmist) will call unto Him. The prayers of the pious are heard by God and fulfilled. The בני איש, too, should therefore fear the Lord. In v. 2 the Psalmist says: 'When I call answer me, O God of my righteousness; in distress Thou hast set me at large; be gracious unto me and hear my prayer'. And he is sure that his prayer will be heard (see vv. 7 and 8).

In v. 5 the בני איש are told to fear the Lord—this is the meaning of רגזו—and not to sin, to think in their hearts—of God—and to be silent—and trust in God.—For אמר 'to think', cf. Exodus ch. 2, v. 14 (הלהרגני אתה אמר 'thinkest thou to kill me'?). For the meaning of דמו cf. Psalm 37, v. 7 (דום לי' והתחולל לו 'Be silent unto the Lord and wait patiently for him'). The emendations suggested by Gunkel and others for אמרו in this verse (see Gunkel, *op. cit.*, p. 17) are, apart from being superfluous, un-Hebraic and spoil the sense of the Psalm.

10. In v. 6 the Psalmist tells the בני איש to offer sacrifices of righteousness and to put their trust in the Lord. In v. 7 the Psalmist continues: 'Many (of these people) say: 'who will show us any good (i. e. prosperity)?'; lift Thou up upon us the light of Thy countenance, O Lord'. The Psalmist, in this verse, prays to God that He should give prosperity to the people, so that they may see that the good things in life come from God. For a similar idea cf. Psalm 37, vv. 3–7. Gunkel debars himself from the

[1] The emendations suggested for הפלה י' חסיד לו—see Briggs, *op. cit.*, p. 33; Kittel, *op. cit.*, p. 14; Gunkel, *op. cit.*, pp. 15 and 16—are not only unnecessary, but are detrimental to the understanding of the Psalm.

right understanding of this verse by his emendation of the second half of the verse; see Gunkel, *op. cit.*, pp. 15 and 17. In v. 8 the Psalmist assumes that God has already fulfilled the prayer which he uttered in v. 7[b] (cf. v. 4) and has sent prosperity to the people by blessing with plenty their fields and vineyards. Understood in this way v. 8 gives an excellent sense, and the awkward explanations of מעת (see commentaries and versions) are unnecessary. The Psalmist says: Thou hast put gladness into my heart *from the time that* (*since*)—this is the meaning of מעת and not 'more than in the time that'—their corn and their wine are increased (have become abundant). They know now that all the blessings come from God. And the Psalmist is at peace. He knows that he has transmitted his faith in God to other human beings, to the בני איש. And the thought of his own strong faith in God and of his having planted the same faith in the hearts of others gives him perfect peace. The use of יחדו in v. 9 is 'popular'. יחדו has given difficulties to commentators; see the commentaries cited above, especially Chajes, *op. cit.*, pp. 7–8. It may be that the thought of his fellow-men is reflected in יחדו. It may be that 'in peace together' means 'secure in this peace (of perfect faith in God) together with my fellow-men'. It is interesting to note that Ibn-Ezra (on this verse) observes as follows: וטעם יחדו הרבים והוא עמהם 'And the meaning of יחדו is: the many (cf. the first word—רבים—in v. 7) and he with them.' V. 9 would then have to be translated: 'In peace together (i.e. secure in this peace together with my fellow-men) I lie down and sleep, for Thou, O Lord, alone makest me dwell in safety.' I think that it is best to refer לבדד to God. Cf. Ibn-Ezra (on this verse): ומלת בדד בלמ"ד או בחסרונה שוה וככה מלת לבטח ויש בטח והנה ה' בדד ינחנו ונכון הוא שהשם לבדו וככה זה. 'And the word בדד with *lamed* or without it is equal (has the same meaning), and so (also) the word לבטח, and there is also בטח (without ל), and behold (compare) ה' בדד ינחנו (Deuteronomy ch. 32, v. 12[a]: 'The Lord alone did lead

him'), and it is right (it means) that God alone (did lead him) and so (also) this (the word לבדד in verse 9 in Psalm 4)'. The difficulties with regard to לבדד (see commentaries) then disappear. Psalm 4 is not an evening prayer; see Delitzsch, Briggs, and others. It is an ordinary Psalm, as Psalm 1 and Psalm 3. The words אשכבה ואישן merely picture the feeling of security and peaceful bliss of the Psalmist.[1]

[1] Mowinckel, *Psalmenstudien*, I, p. 156 tries to read in into this Psalm (v. 9) something which has never been in it and which can never be found in it ('Inkubationsorakel'!).

II

THE MEANING OF גוים, אנוש

Psalms 9 and 10.

1. Let us look now at *Psalms 9 and 10.* The difficulties with regard to these Psalms arise mainly from the supposition that the enemies in Psalm 9 and in a part of Psalm 10 are not individuals but nations, heathens (see Briggs, *op. cit.*, p. 68 ff.; Baethgen, *op. cit.*, p. 22 ff.; Kittel, *op. cit.*, p. 30 ff.; Gunkel, *op. cit.*, p. 30 ff.). The reason for this supposition is the word גוים used in this Psalm (vv. 6, 16, 18, 20, 21). Delitzsch translates גוים in v. 6 and v. 16: 'Völker', in vv. 18, 20, 21: 'Heiden'. Briggs: 'nations'. Baethgen, Kittel, Gunkel: 'Heiden'. I suggest that גוים in Psalm 9 does not mean 'nations', 'heathens', but 'people who possess land', 'wealthy people'. גוים here has a meaning similar to that of בני אדם. Only in גוים the group-idea is more pronounced. גוים, in this meaning, is also related to עם הארץ, without having the political and specific social significance of עם הארץ.[1] גוי would sometimes mean 'a person of possession', 'a wealthy man', 'a person of note'. גוי in Genesis ch. 20, v. 4[b] would have this meaning. Abimelech could not call himself 'a nation'! We can therefore translate הגוי גם צדיק תהרג 'Wilt Thou slay also a righteous person?' It is difficult to express in English the connotation of 'highly placed'. The word גוי in this verse has that flavour. But 'person' is adequate enough for the translation. גוי can also mean 'a group of people'. In Jeremiah ch. 5, v. 29 the wicked rich are called גוי: אם בגוי אשר כזה לא תתנקם נפשי. Cf. vv. 26–8. Very interesting is Haggai ch. 2, v. 14. In that verse the prophet says: כן העם הזה וכן הגוי הזה לפני נאם י׳. It is obvious that העם

[1] See my article 'The meaning of עם הארץ in the Old Testament' in the *Journal of Theological Studies*, April, 1929, pp. 245–9.

and הגוי cannot mean the same thing. 'So is this people, and so is this nation' is feeble. I suggest that העם refers to the priests[1] and הגוי to the people who can afford to bring sacrifices, who possess land and cattle. Cf. also vv. 16, 17, 19. Only owners of fields and vineyards have seed in the barn, vine, fig-trees, pomegranates and olive-trees. Ibn-Ezra already remarks (on v. 14): כן העם הזה הם הכהנים וכן הגוי הזה הם ישראל. 'העם הזה that is the priests, הגוי הזה that is Israel.' I add: 'the possessing Israel'.

2. Now a few examples with regard to גוים. In Deuteronomy ch. 32, v. 8 גוים is parallel to בני אדם. In Jeremiah ch. 6, v. 18 שמעו הגוים is parallel to שמעי הארץ. הארץ refers to the land, and הגוים refers to the owners of the land.[2] Cf. vv. 12–13: בוצע בצע; בתיהם, שדות, ישבי הארץ. In Ezekiel ch. 2, v. 3 the children of Israel are called גוים המורדים 'the rebellious people.' In Psalm 94, v. 10 גוים is parallel to אדם. In Job ch. 34, v. 29 גוי is parallel to אדם.

This meaning of גוים (and גוי) is contained in many more passages in the Bible, as we shall have occasion to see later. גוים in Psalm 9 are therefore the wicked people who are the enemies of the righteous and oppress the poor. The גוים are not heathens but Israelites, bad Israelites.[3] The idea underlying the suggestion made by Graetz and others that גוים should be read גאים and that wicked Israelites are

[1] The priests were a part of the עם (הארץ) and were also called עם; see my article in the *Journal of Theological Studies*, p. 246.

[2] עדה in v. 18[b] is also significant; see my article in the *Journal of Theological Studies*, p. 246.

[3] In the course of time גוים also signified '(Jewish) landowners, peasants who transgressed the law of the Torah', then generally 'men who did not live a Jewish life'. Hence the appellation of גוי, גוים (in every-day language) as applied to Jews who transgress the Jewish law. גוים 'Gentiles', on the other hand, derives its meaning from גוים 'nations', a meaning which this word very often has in the Bible. The half-contemptuous meaning attaches to the former, not to the latter. Cf. the word פְּרִיץ as used up to the present day. For עם הארץ in the sense of 'the ignorant people', 'the ignorant men', see my article in the *Journal of Theological Studies*, pp. 248–9.

meant is right. Only the emendation, as we see, is unnecessary. Gunkel's objection to this suggestion flows, of course, from wrong premises. He thinks that גוים are 'heathens' and he therefore attributes to this Psalm a political character; see Gunkel, *op. cit.*, p. 35.

גוים in v. 6 are identical with רשע (in the same verse) and האויב in v. 7, just as בני אדם in Psalm 14, v. 2 are identical with נבל in Psalm 14, v. 1. There is nothing of eschatology in this verse or in the following verses (vv. 6–13, 16, 17; see Gunkel, *op. cit.*, pp. 33–4). גוים are the powerful men (in Israel) who are the enemies of the poor. Vv. 9–10 are quite in order. God is a righteous judge, and He will therefore judge and punish the wicked. The change of plural and singular occurs frequently, as shown above. Psalm 9, v. 16 expresses the same idea as Psalm 7, vv. 16–17. And that idea can be applied only to individuals and not to nations. 'In the net which they hid is their own foot taken' the Psalmist (or any poet) would not say of nations. In all the Psalms in which this picture is used (or that of the pit) it applies to the individual. See Psalm 10, v. 9; Psalm 25, v. 15; Psalm 31, v. 5; Psalm 35, vv. 7–8; Psalm 140, v. 6; cf. also Psalm 141, vv. 9 and 10. Gunkel, on p. 34, comments: 'Was die Heiden geplant haben, ist ihnen selber zuteil geworden,' and goes on to say that the picture of net and pit is used especially ('besonders') of individuals. No, it is used *only* of individuals.

Vv. 14–15 are also perfectly in order, and there is nothing surprising about them (see Kittel, *op. cit.*, p. 34!).

3. V. 17 follows logically upon v. 16. The verses that follow (18–21) are quite clear. But, again, there is one word that has caused difficulties to commentators. That word is אנוש. What is the meaning of the word אנוש?

All commentators agree that אנוש designates the 'weak man'; see commentaries. Then the question arises: why should the weak man be mentioned here? Nothing was said of the weakness of man before. In v. 21 אנוש is

especially difficult. Kittel, *loc. cit.*, says: 'Nicht leicht hingegen ist zu sagen was 21^{b} meint. Lag dem Dichter etwa die hellenistische Sitte, die Herrscher zu vergöttern, im Sinne?' (cf. Rashi on this verse). The usual translation of v. 21^{b} is: 'let the nations know they are but men'. But then there should have been כי after גוים. The passages which Delitzsch (*op. cit.*, p. 122) quotes, in endeavouring to show that כי could be omitted, do not prove anything for this verse. In Psalm 10, v. 18 אנוש in the meaning of 'weak man', 'mere man', 'mortal' is also difficult; see later.

I suggest that אנוש does not mean 'weak man' but 'strong man'. אנוש is, as בן אדם and אדם, the man of high position, the owner of land, the powerful man.

In the following passages אנוש is used parallel with בני אדם or אדם, בן אדם: Isaiah ch. 13, v. 12; ch. 51, v. 12; ch. 56, v. 2; Psalm 8, v. 5; Psalm 73, v. 5; Psalm 90, v. 3; Psalm 144, v. 3 (בן אנוש); Job ch. 25, v. 6; Job ch. 36, v. 25. Isaiah ch. 13, v. 11^{b} (והשבתי גאון זדים וגאות עריצים אשפיל) shows clearly the specific meaning of אנוש (and אדם) in v. 12. Note also רשעים in v. 11^{a}. In Isaiah ch. 13, v. 7^{b}, too, אנוש is the haughty man. The heart even of the haughty, proud man will melt!

In Isaiah ch. 24, v. 6 אנוש is used parallel with ישבי ארץ. ישבי ארץ are the dwellers on the land, the possessors of land; cf. vv. 4–5 and v. 7, also Ezekiel ch. 7, v. 7, and see my article in the *Journal of Theological Studies*, p. 247.

In Isaiah ch. 33, v. 8 אנוש is used parallel with ערים; cf. also v. 9 (ארץ, לבנון, השרון, בשן וכרמל). In Isaiah ch. 51, vv. 7 and 12, אנוש is the oppressor; cf. המציק in v. 13. In Isaiah ch. 56, v. 2 the prophet thinks especially of the people that count, of men who can mete out justice and injustice, who can do good and evil, who can profane the Sabbath and keep it holy. The man who has no possessions cannot really break the Sabbath.

In Jeremiah ch. 20, v. 10 אנוש שלמי is parallel with שמרי צלעי.

4. In Psalm 55, v. 14 אנוש is used in a sense similar to that in Jeremiah ch. 20, v. 10. In Psalm 56, v. 2 אנוש is parallel to לְחֵם (and not to אלהים; see Delitzsch, *op. cit.*, p. 393; Baethgen, *op. cit.*, p. 165; also Gunkel, *op. cit.*, p. 243. The emendation in this verse adopted by Gunkel falls away). אנוש is therefore the adversary, the oppressor.[1] In Psalm 66, v. 12 אנוש is the haughty oppressor. Delitzsch, *op. cit.*, p. 435, translates 'Liessest Elende unser Haupt überfahren', and tries to explain (on p. 437) that the tyrants are called אנוש 'as miserable mortals' ('als elende Sterbliche'). Such artificial translation and explanation are now unnecessary.

In Psalm 73, vv. 3 and 5 the contrast is between boastful idlers and wicked good-for-nothings (הוללים, רשעים) on the one hand, and men who are in high positions in life but work (for the increase of their possessions) and sometimes suffer (in the diminution of their wealth or through illness) on the other hand. The latter are אנוש and אדם.

In Psalm 90, v. 3 בני אדם and אנוש designate man in the higher aspect. Even the highest man, the Psalmist says, vanishes like grass. The same applies to אנוש in Psalm 103, v. 15.

In Psalm 104, v. 15 אנוש is the man with possessions. He who possesses vineyards has wine, and he who possesses fields has bread. In v. 14 האדם is used.

בן אנוש in Psalm 144, v. 3 and אדם in the same verse and in v. 4 are used in the same sense as אנוש and בני אדם in Psalm 90, v. 3 and in Psalm 103, v. 15.

In Job ch. 5, v. 17 אנוש designates a highly placed man (as Job was). Similarly האנוש in ch. 4, v. 17. So also אנוש in ch. 7, v. 1 and v. 17; ch. 9, v. 2; ch. 10, vv. 4, 5; ch. 13,

[1] Chajes, *op. cit.*, p. 121, observes: וכנראה באורו כאן אדם רע, עריץ 'And it seems that its meaning (i.e. the meaning of אנוש) here is "an evil man", "an oppressor".' Chajes refers to Jeremiah ch. 17, v. 9: עקב הלב מכל ואנש הוא. The word אנש in that verse, however, requires detailed examination, and I leave it out of account for the present. Why Chajes suggests emendations in this verse (Psalm 56, v. 2) is difficult to understand.

v. 9; ch. 14, v. 19; ch. 15, v. 14; ch. 25, vv. 4, 6; ch. 28, vv. 4, 13; ch. 32, v. 8; ch. 33, vv. 12, 26; ch. 36, v. 25.

In Deuteronomy ch. 32, v. 26 אנוש seems to refer to humanity. But even there אנוש means 'thinking humanity', 'conscious humanity'. אשביתה מאנוש זכרם.

5. Very instructive is 2 Chronicles ch. 14, v. 10. Asa prays to God against Zerah the Ethiopian, and ends his short prayer with the words ה' אלהינו אתה אל יעצר עמך אנוש. The usual translation is: 'O Lord, Thou art our God; let not man (or, mortal man) prevail against Thee.' See also Delitzsch, *loc. cit.*, and Gunkel, *loc. cit.* But if that were so, if אנוש here designated 'the weak man', then Asa was the אנוש and not Zerah the Ethiopian. Does not Asa refer to himself (and to his people) as אין כח? Zerah and his army were the רב; the Ethiopians were the המון. Why then should Zerah be called 'the weak man'? The use of אנוש is, however, clear if it means, 'the haughty, the arrogant man'. And that is the meaning of אנוש here. 'Let not the haughty man (the oppressor) prevail with Thee,' i.e. help him that has no strength (אין כח) but does what is good and righteous in the eyes of the Lord his God (see beginning of ch. 14) against him who is mighty (רב) but does not fear the Lord God. It may be that the words of Rashi (on this verse) also support this view (כי אנוש מושל).

I hope that I have shown that אנוש means 'a man in a high position', sometimes 'a superior man', sometimes 'a man of wealth', and sometimes also 'a haughty, arrogant, wicked man'.

I suggest that it is especially in the latter meaning that the word אנוש is used in Psalm 9, v. 20 and v. 21, and in Psalm 10, v. 18. The גוים, the wealthy, wicked people (Israelites), are the אנוש, just as they are the רשעים and שכחי אלהים. ענוים are contrasted with רשעים and גוים, and אנוש is contrasted with אביון. 'Arise, O Lord, let the haughty man not prevail, let the גוים (the wicked, wealthy people) be judged in Thy sight' (v. 20) gives very good sense.

6. What about v. 21? Whether מורה means 'teacher' or 'fear' (see commentaries), the meaning of 21^{b} is, I submit, clear. ידעו גוים אנוש המה סלה is to be translated: 'let the mighty[1] know (namely, that there is a God who judges man and even haughty man); they are haughty men! Selah'. ידעו גוים refers back to ישפטו גוים על פניך and also to שיתה ה' מורה להם. 'Let the mighty know!' the Psalmist exclaims. What they should know he need not express in words. He knows it, and they must know it, i.e. that there is a God and that God is the judge (cf. also v. 5 and vv. 8–9). Then comes the final condemnation: 'They are haughty, arrogant men!'.[2] It will do them good to be shown that God helps the righteous poor and punishes the wicked rich. One can almost see how the Psalmist, while saying אנוש המה, raises his hand in anger towards the arrogant evil-doers. Psalm 9 is throughout an individual Psalm. The righteous poor speaks against the wicked rich. And so in Psalm 10.

7. In Psalm 10 the wicked oppressor of the poor is vividly described. The גוים in v. 16 are the individual רשעים. The Lord is King. The wicked oppressors will perish, and the prayers of the poor and meek will be heard, and the

[1] I choose the word 'mighty' for the sake of brevity. 'The mighty' are 'the wicked mighty', 'the wicked people of wealth and power'. In some passages the translation 'nobles' is more suitable; see later.

[2] אנוש is used here in the collective sense; cf. v. 6: רשע follows upon גוים, and שמם refers to both גוים and רשע. In v. 7 אבד זכרם המה refers to האויב, תמו refers to חרבות (and the accents are right!), and חרבות means 'palaces', 'habitations'. See my article 'The meaning of חָרְבוֹת' in the *Jewish Quarterly Review*, 1908, p. 637 ff. See also Nöldeke, *Neue Beiträge zur semitischen Sprachwissenschaft*, Strassburg, 1910, p. 52, note 3. 'Königs- oder Herrenbau' is just the meaning suitable for חרבות. The doubt expressed by Nöldeke as to the meaning suggested by me for חרבות is not substantiated by him. Job ch. 3, v. 14 is not the only passage that speaks for the meaning proposed by me. This verse (Psalm 9, v. 7) supports it as strongly as Job ch. 3, v. 14. All the suggested readings fall away, and this much emended verse (see Delitzsch, Kittel, Gunkel, and others) becomes perfectly clear.

fatherless and the oppressed will obtain their rights.[1] But what is the meaning of לערץ אנוש מן־הארץ עוד בל־יוסיף (v. 18b)? The usual translation is: 'That man which is of the earth may be terrible no more.' See commentaries, especially Delitzsch, *op. cit.*, p. 130; Baethgen, *op. cit.*, p. 22; Gunkel, *op. cit.*, p. 40. But the poor man is also 'man of the earth'. Gunkel, *loc. cit.*, says: 'מן־הארץ gehört zum Verbum, vgl. Psalm 148_7, nicht zu אנוש: der Begriff "Erdenmensch" gehört erst einer viel späteren Zeit an vgl. zu Psalm 17_{14}.' But this does not make the words more satisfactory. As a piece of remarkable exegesis the comments of Briggs may be quoted here. Briggs translates v. 18 (p. 69): 'To judge the orphan and the oppressed, to terrify (mere) man from the land'. On p. 81 he comments as follows: 'An early copyist inserted in the margin a cognate thought in a familiar phrase "he shall not do it again", namely the mere man, that is, what he had done as described in the Psalm, because he will no more be in the land. This was subsequently incorporated in the text, destroying the measures of the last couplet, and so confusing the meaning of the clause as to give trouble to all subsequent readers.' Strange exegesis indeed!

It seems to me that the meaning of v. 18b is quite simple. אנוש is the man of high position who is wicked, who oppresses and terrifies the poor. He is the owner of landed estates. This latter fact is expressed by אנוש מן־הארץ. מן־הארץ means, 'the haughty man of the land', 'the haughty man who is the owner of land'. מן־הארץ defines אנוש more fully. We should say to-day, 'the barons', 'the lords of the land'. It may be that the defining words מן־הארץ were added by the Psalmist in order to have an assonance with לערץ. The words 'no more shall oppress (terrify) the (haughty) man of the land' sum up the prayers of the Psalmist in

[1] In vv. 16–18 the Psalm does not go back to the political theme and to the heathens (so Gunkel, *op. cit.*, p. 36). There never was a political theme in this Psalm nor were heathens mentioned in it.

Psalm 10; cf. אל יעז אנוש in Psalm 9, v. 20. When the arm of the wicked is broken (v. 15), and the wealthy oppressors have perished (v. 16), and God fulfils the desire of the poor (v. 17), then the fatherless and the oppressed will obtain their rights and the lords of the land will oppress no more. V. 18^{b} gives therefore very good sense.

The new meaning suggested here for אנוש and גוים has thus made a satisfactory explanation of Psalms 9 and 10 possible.

III

THE MEANING OF אנוש, גוים, לאמים, תבל

Psalm 8.

1. Let us see now whether the new meaning of אנוש helps us better to understand Psalm 8. The beauty and loftiness of thought of Psalm 8 are evident to all who read it. But there seems to be in this Psalm still more than is generally assumed. The majesty of God as manifested in His creations—the heavens, the moon, and the stars—makes the Psalmist wonder why He remembers man and is mindful of the son of man and has made him only a little less than God.[1] He has crowned him with glory and honour and has given him dominion over the works of His hands. The Psalmist does not give an answer to the question. He does not show whether he is pleased with the fact which he states or not. But one thing is clear: the man whom the Psalmist has in mind is a great man, a man of wealth and position, a man to whom belong sheep and oxen, who has dominion over the birds of heaven and the fish of the sea, and who passeth through the paths of the seas,[2] in a word—is a superior man. A superior man is also only a man, a human being. But the sight of a superior man will sooner call forth those thoughts in the mind of the

[1] אלהים means here 'God' and not 'the angels'. Cf. Ezekiel ch. 28, v. 2; cf. also v. 14, and see my translation of that verse in my lecture *The Bible as Literature* (London, 1929), p. 17 (אלהים היית 'a God thou wast').

[2] I think that it is best to refer עבר ארחות ימים to man. Cf. Ibn-Ezra (on v. 9[b]) וטעם עובר ארחות ימים שבחכמתו עושה ספינות ויכיר ארחות ימים 'And the meaning of "he passeth through the paths of the seas" is: because through his (man's) wisdom he makes ships and recognizes (knows) the paths of the seas.' According to this interpretation ימים gives a better sense than מים, and the emendation is entirely unnecessary; cf. Gunkel, *op. cit.*, pp. 27 and 30. Ibn-Ezra mentions also the interpretation which refers עובר ארחות ימים to the fish of the sea. The emendation into מים is superfluous in either case.

Psalmist than the sight of an oppressed, downtrodden, poor man. There is, however, also another thought which occupies the mind of the Psalmist: why should the superior man be so great? why should God give him so much glory and honour and power? why should there be a superior man? It is not only the universal question 'why should man be almost God-like?' that troubles the Psalmist, but also—and perhaps chiefly—the question 'why is the superior man—who is often haughty and wicked—favoured by God?'. Therefore the Psalmist uses the words בן אדם and אנוש. The question is not answered. But the Psalmist derives comfort from the thought that God's name is mighty in all the earth—or, land—and His glory is upon the heavens. The power of God is real, the power of man is illusory. The power of God endures for ever, the power of man—even of the mightiest man—vanishes. Then the Psalmist gives utterance to a thought which recurs again and again in the Psalms, though it is subdued in this Psalm. This thought recedes, as it were, before the majesty of God, but it is there. And that is: what about the adversary, the enemy, the avenger? The adversary, the enemy, the avenger, is the wicked haughty man. מתנקם is one who acts as if he were an avenger. It is a synonym for enemy; cf. Psalm 44, v. 17. He will be destroyed.[1] God established strength to serve against His enemies—the wicked people are also the enemies of God.—And this strength He established out of the mouth of babes and sucklings.

2. It is difficult to see how babes and sucklings come in here. Rashi takes עוללים ויונקים to refer to the Priests and Levites. Some commentators think that these words refer to Israel as a weak and helpless people (see Baethgen,

[1] It is quite unnecessary to emend ומתנקם into ומתקומם and להשבית into להביש; see Gunkel, *loc. cit.* These emendations rob the verse of its real strength. The reading of יַסַּדְתָּ עֹז for יִסַּדְתָּ עֹז (see Gunkel, *op. cit.*, p. 29) is also unjustified. The enemies are not to be reproved and to be put to shame. They are to cease to exist; cf. Psalm 9, vv. 4, 6, 7, 16, 18; Psalm 10, vv. 15, 16.

op. cit., p. 21). It may be that by עוללים ויונקים are meant the righteous poor whose cause the Psalmist constantly pleads and who are as innocent as babes and sucklings.[1] But whether עוללים ויונקים mean 'innocent children' or 'innocent men', the idea is the same, The innocence of the good people will in the end prevail against the wickedness of the bad people. Among the good people is the Psalmist himself.[2] The bad people are represented by צורריך, אויב ומתנקם. And they are called בן אדם and אנוש. V. 3 has now its proper place in the scheme of Psalm 8. There is no 'strange contrast' (see Gunkel, *op. cit.*, p. 27) between vv. 2 and 3. V. 3 is an essential part of the Psalm. There is an organic connexion between vv. 3 and 5–9. In בן אדם and אנוש is also mirrored the אויב ומתנקם. Psalm 8 is an individual Psalm. Vv. 2–3 and 10 are also spoken by an individual (against Gunkel, *op. cit.*, p. 27 ff., and Kittel, *op. cit.*, p. 25 ff.).[3] The fact that the

[1] The omission of ויונקים (see Gunkel, *op. cit.*, pp. 27 and 29) is unwarranted. Cf. Joel ch. 2, v. 16 (אספו עוללים ויונקי שדים); Jeremiah ch. 44, v. 7 (עולל ויונק); Lamentations ch. 2, v. 11 (עולל ויונק); also 1 Samuel ch. 15, v. 3, and 1 Samuel ch. 22, v. 19 (מעולל ועד יונק).

[2] It may be that מִפִּי refers to the mouth of the Psalmist. מפי עוללים ויונקים יסדת עז would then mean that the hymns and prayers of the Psalmist and of all the righteous poor would establish strength against the enemies, against the bad people. The prayers of the poor will be heard by God. Cf. Psalm 10, v. 17: תאות ענוים שמעת ה' תכין לבם תקשיב אזנך 'The desire of the humble Thou hast heard, O Lord; Thou wilt establish their heart, Thou wilt cause Thine ear to hear.' Cf. also Psalm 6, vv. 9–11; סורו ממני כל־פעלי אן כי־שמע ה' קול בכיי: שמע ה' תחנתי ה' תפלתי יקח: יבשו ויבהלו מאד כל־איבי ישבו יבשו רגע 'Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity; for the Lord hath heard the voice of my weeping. The Lord hath heard my supplication; the Lord will receive my prayer. All mine enemies shall be ashamed and sore vexed; they shall turn back and be ashamed suddenly.' It is quite possible that it is to the voice of weeping, to the supplication and the prayer of the Psalmist, of the righteous poor, that מפי עוללים ויונקים refers. The meaning would be satisfactory, and the place of the verse in the Psalm would be excellently explained.

[3] The Psalmist says אדנינו 'our Lord' just as Asa says (2 Chronicles ch. 14, v. 10) אלהינו 'our God'. The God of the Psalmist is the God

thoughts about the wicked man are expressed by the Psalmist in words which also reflect contemplations about man in general adds to the majestic beauty of this Psalm. Cf. v. 5^a in Psalm 23 in relation to the whole Psalm.

Psalm 7.

3. We shall now turn to *Psalm 7.* Psalm 7 is an individual Psalm. An individual prays to God for help against his enemies. Who is the praying individual? A righteous man; see v. 9^b. Who are the enemies? Wicked men; see v. 10^a, vv. 13–17. The wicked men are men of wealth; see Psalm 9, v. 1; Psalm 10, v. 5^a and vv. 8–9; Psalm 12, v. 6. The righteous are poor; see Psalm 9, v. 19; Psalm 10, vv. 8, 9, 17; Psalm 12, v. 6. It is therefore a poor righteous man who is praying against rich wicked men who are his adversaries. And he asks God for judgement; v. 7 ff. The commentators, however, find it strange that the Psalmist asks for *world-judgement.* And some commentators (see Gunkel, *op. cit.*, p. 24) conclude from v. 7 ff. that it is Israel who prays to God and not an individual. Others say that v. 7 ff. are eschatological; see Kittel, *op. cit.*, pp. 24–5. Others, again, regard vv. 7–12, or some of these verses, as glosses (see Briggs, *op. cit.*, p. 53, also Gunkel, *op. cit.*, p. 25). Gunkel, who is for the unity of the Psalm, thinks that the reason for the Psalmist calling for the judgement of the nations is to be found in the fact that there is in these verses an echo of the words of a king ('dass darin die Worte eines Königs nachklingen').

4. I suggest that no world-judgement is mentioned in v. 7 ff., and that not nations but individuals are to be judged. What is the meaning of לאמים in v. 8? לאמים is generally held to mean 'nations', 'peoples'. Gunkel, following Budde, emends לאמים into אלהים and compares עדת אל in Psalm 82, v. 1. But does לאמים mean every-

of Israel. Cf. also Deuteronomy ch. 32, v. 3; 1 Samuel ch. 2, v. 2; Nehemiah ch. 8, v. 10.

where in the Bible 'nations', 'peoples'? לאמים, I submit, means sometimes 'individuals', 'groups of individuals', 'people' (not 'peoples'), especially 'people of importance', 'people of wealth and position'. In other words, לאמים has sometimes the same meaning as that which, as I have shown above, גוים sometimes has, namely, 'men of possessions', 'nobles'. לאם would in some passages in the Bible, just as גוי, mean 'a person of importance'. The meaning of Genesis ch. 25, v. 23, would now be perfectly clear. The Lord told Rebecca that she would be the mother of two important persons, two noble men, two men who would have possessions and be leaders of men. Such a person is called גוי or לאם. And in Genesis ch. 25, v. 23, we have both these words. שני לאמים and שני גוים mean, 'two prominent persons'.[1] Let us translate גוים by 'nobles', 'noblemen', and לאמים by 'mighty men', or, shorter, 'lords'. V. 23[b] (ולאם מלאם יאמץ ורב יעבד צעיר) would then have to be translated: 'And one lord (or, nobleman) will be stronger than the other lord, and the greater shall serve the smaller (the less significant).' I translate ורב יעבד צעיר by 'and the greater shall serve the smaller' and not (as is usual) 'and the elder shall serve the younger', because רב sometimes means 'great', 'important', but never means 'elder'. In Job ch. 32, v. 9 רבים means, 'the great ones', and not 'the old ones'. The emendations by Budde (שָׂבִים) and Duhm (רַב יָמִים)—see Gesenius' *HWB.*, 17th edition, p. 740—are entirely uncalled for.[2] זקנים (in the same verse) means 'elders'. I think that in Job ch. 11, v. 19 also רבים means 'the great ones' and not 'many'. There is much more point in 'great ones' entreating his favour than 'many'. The same, I think, applies to Proverbs ch. 19, v. 6. For צעיר 'little', 'insignificant', see Gesenius-Brown's *Lexicon*, p. 589, and Gesenius' *HWB.*, 17th ed., p. 689. The sense

[1] Cf. the note of Rashi on גוים in this verse (כמו, גיים כתיב גאים)!

[2] The meaning given for רבים in Gesenius' *HWB.*, *loc. cit.*, is: 'die Bejahrten'.

of ורב יעבד צעיר becomes clearer through a proper understanding of לאם, namely as meaning 'a person', 'a person of importance'.

5. It seems to me that we can now understand much better Genesis ch. 35, v. 11. The verse reads: ויאמר לו אלהים אני אל שדי פרה ורבה גוי וקהל גוים יהיה ממך ומלכים מחלציך יצאו. The usual translation is: 'And God said unto him: I am God Almighty. Be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee, and kings shall come out of thy loins.' This translation has never appeared to me satisfactory. It is strange to have to take גוי together with וקהל גוים. What is the meaning of 'a nation and a company of nations'? I suggest that גוי is a vocative. Jacob is addressed by God as גוי 'nobleman', 'prominent man', 'lord'.[1] In Genesis ch. 20, v. 4, Abimelech refers to himself as גוי; see above, p. 14. I translate the verse as follows: 'And God said to him: "I am God Almighty. Be fruitful and multiply, nobleman, and a company of noblemen shall be of thee, and kings shall come out of thy loins".' 'Nobleman' is a much better parallel to 'kings' than 'nations'. And v. 12 shows us clearly what the chief characteristic of a גוי is: he is the owner of land. Therefore God says (ch. 35, v. 12): ואת הארץ אשר נתתי לאברהם וליצחק לך אתננה ולזרעך אחריך אתן את הארץ 'And the land which I gave unto Abraham and Isaac, to thee I will give it, and to thy seed after thee will I give the land.' It is clear now why in Genesis ch. 48, v. 4, the word גוי is omitted. Jacob tells Joseph that God Almighty appeared unto him at Luz in the land of Canaan and blessed him (v. 3). V. 4 then continues: ויאמר אלי הנני מפרך והרביתך ונתתיך לקהל עמים ונתתי את הארץ הזאת לזרעך אחריך אחזת עולם 'And He said unto me: Behold, I will make thee fruitful and multiply thee, and I will make of thee a company of noblemen; and will give this land to thy seed after thee for an everlasting pos-

[1] Ezekiel is addressed by God as בן־אדם; see my article in the *Jewish Quarterly Review*, 1905, p. 448.

session.' When Jacob tells Joseph of the vision which is described in Genesis ch. 35, vv. 9–12, he omits the word גוי, as גוי was the word by which Jacob was addressed by God. For ונתתיך לקהל עמים Jacob says וקהל גוים יהיה ממך, expressing the same idea with a slight variation of the words. But גוי is rightly omitted. Cf. also Genesis ch. 28, v. 3. Isaac blesses Jacob and says: ואל שדי יברך אתך ויפרך וירבך והיית לקהל עמים 'And God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a company of noblemen.' גוי (or עם) is not mentioned. קהל עמים is meant and therefore stated (as in Genesis ch. 48, v. 4). Cf. also v. 4 (Jacob will inherit the land).

גוי has the same meaning in Genesis ch. 46, v. 3. God says to Jacob אל־תירא מרדה מצרימה כי־לגוי גדול אשימך שם 'Fear not to go down into Egypt; for I will there make of thee a great nobleman.' And indeed Jacob was a great nobleman, a great lord in Egypt. Cf. Genesis ch. 47, v. 5 ff., and see especially v. 11: ויושב יוסף את־אביו ואת־אחיו ויתן להם אחזה בארץ מצרים במיטב הארץ בארץ רעמסס כאשר צוה פרעה 'And Joseph placed his father and his brethren, and gave them a possession in the land of Egypt, in the best of the land, in the land of Rameses, as Pharaoh had commanded.'

In the same way Genesis ch. 17, vv. 4–8, has to be understood. Abraham is to become the father of a multitude of great men. Cf. v. 6 (והפרתי אתך במאד מאד ונתתיך לגויים ומלכים ממך יצאו) with Genesis ch. 35, v. 11. מלכים probably means 'great landowners', who are veritable kings in their dominions. These גוים and מלכים are the seed of Abraham (v. 7). And what will God do? He will give them the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession (v. 8). Cf. also v. 16; ch. 26, v. 4; ch. 48, v. 19. The same meaning, I suggest, we have in Genesis ch. 12, v. 2. גוי גדול is 'a great nobleman', 'a great lord'. He will possess the land, and his children will possess it after him (v. 7). ואעשך לגוי גדול is to be translated: 'And I will make of thee a great nobleman (or, a great lord)'. See also

ch. 13, vv. 15–17. The same meaning of גוי we have, I suggest, in Genesis ch. 17, v, 20; ch. 18, v. 18[1]; ch. 21 v. 18.

In Psalm 43, v. 1 גוי לא־חסיד is parallel to איש מרמה ועולה. גוי means here the individual powerful man, the wicked lord. לא־חסיד makes the meaning of גוי in this verse still clearer.

6. The meaning suggested here for גוים enables us also to explain Job ch. 12, v. 23: משגיא לגוים ויאבדם שטח לגוים וינחם. The Revised Version translates: 'He increaseth the nations, and destroyeth them; He spreadeth the nations abroad, and bringeth them in.' In Driver-Gray's *Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Job* (in the *International Critical Commentary*), p. 119, the translation for וינחם is 'and leaveth them'; see also *op. cit.*, Part II (*Philological Notes*), pp. 80–81.

The difficulty in this verse is 'nations'. Vv. 17–21 speak of individuals, and v. 24 speaks of individuals. Why should v. 23 speak of nations? Suggestions have been made for the transposition or omission of v. 23 or of v. 24 f.; see Budde, *Das Buch Hiob*, 1913, pp. 63–64, and Driver-Gray, *op. cit.*, p. 120. According to the meaning suggested here for גוים v. 23 is perfectly clear. V. 23 does not speak of nations but of individuals: the nobles, the lords. V. 23 is neither to be transposed nor omitted. It is in its right place. Upon יועצים and שפטים (v. 17), מלכים (v. 18), כהנים and איתנים (v. 19), זקנים and נאמנים (v. 20), אפיקים and נדיבים (v. 21) follow גוים (v. 23). גוים are the nobles, the lords. In v. 24 follow the ראשי עם הארץ 'the heads of the lords of the land'; see my article in the *Journal of Theological Studies*, April, 1929, p. 248. In all these verses, therefore, the great ones of the land are enumerated. No mention is made of nations. There is

[1] ואברהם היו יהיה לגוי גדול ועצום ונברכו בו כל גויי הארץ 'And Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty lord, and all the lords of the land shall be blessed in him.'

one thought expressed in all these verses, and that is: God makes the great ones in the land stumble, fall. This thought is also expressed in v. 23. The first word in v. 23 is מִשְׁגִּיא and means 'he causes to err', 'he leads astray'. For the reading מִשְׁגִּיא, see the Notes of the Masora, also Rashi on the verse, quoting יש אומרים; cf. also Driver-Gray, *op. cit.*, Part II, p. 80. ויאבדם does not mean 'and he destroyeth them'. ויאבדם means 'and he causes them to go astray'. Cf. Jeremiah ch. 23, v. 1, where מאבדים does not mean 'that destroy' but 'that cause to go astray'; cf. the parallel word ומפצים, also ותדחום and הפצתם in v. 2, and see Gesenius' *HWB.*, p. 2, and Gesenius-Brown's *Lexicon*, p. 2. Cf. also I Samuel ch. 9, vv. 3 and 20; Jeremiah ch. 50, v. 6; Ezekiel ch. 34, vv. 4, 16; Psalm 119, v. 176; cf. also Deuteronomy ch. 26, v. 5; Isaiah ch. 27, v. 13.

וינחם has the same meaning as ויתעם in v. 24^b and v. 25^b: 'and he leads them about (aimlessly)'.[1] שטח 'he spreadeth' is used in the sense of 'he scattereth', 'he causes to wander about'. The translation of v. 23 would then be: 'He causeth the nobles to err and maketh them go astray (wander about); He spreadeth abroad the lords and leads them about (aimlessly).'[2] The sense of v. 23 is: 'God maketh the nobles err and wander about helplessly.' The difficulties with regard to this verse disappear, and the whole verse is perfectly clear in accordance with the interpretation offered here.

7. We shall return now to the word לאמים. In Genesis ch. 27, v. 29 לאמים does not mean 'nations', but 'important people'. Cf. the parallel sentence הוה גביר לאחיך וישתחוו לך בני אמך 'Be lord over thy brethren, and let thy mother's

[1] The emendation וַיַּכְחֵדֵם suggested by Torczyner (*Das Buch Hiob*, p. 75) for וינחם falls away. שטח, too, is perfectly in order and need not be replaced by any other verb; see Torczyner, *l. c.*

[2] Some MSS. have לאמים instead of לגוים in v. 23^b; see Driver-Gray, *op. cit.*, Part II, p. 80. The parallel words would then be the same—and have the same meaning—as in Psalm 2, v. 1; see later.

sons bow down to thee.' His 'brethren' are not peoples, and his 'mother's sons' are not nations. They are also landowners, lords of the land, also prominent people, but he (Jacob) will be lord over them. In Psalm 67, v. 5[b] לאמים means 'people', not 'nations'.[1] In Psalm 148, v. 11 לאמים is parallel with שפטי ארץ. שפטי ארץ are 'the judges of the land', and לאמים are also 'prominent people', 'lords', 'leaders' in the land. In the same verse are מלכי ארץ parallel with שרים. The same meaning has לאמים in Psalm 149, v. 7[b]. It may be noted that in Psalm 149, vv. 7–8 לאמים is parallel with גוים and נכבדיהם with מלכיהם. Cf. also Proverbs ch. 11, v. 26; ch. 14, v. 28, where לאום means (in the collective sense) 'people', and not 'a nation'.

Very interesting is Proverbs ch. 14, v. 37: צדקה תרומם גוי וחסד לאמים חטאת 'Righteousness exalteth a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people' does not give good sense. Proverbs ch. 14 speaks of wise men and fools, of good and bad men, of righteous and wicked men. But it does not speak of nations. Then, צדקה is applied to individuals and not to nations. According to the explanation of גוי and לאם given here Proverbs ch. 14, v. 34 is clear. גוי means 'a nobleman' (or, in the collective sense, 'noblemen') and לאמים means 'noble men', 'noble people'. The translation of this verse would now be: 'Righteousness exalteth the nobleman, and the shame (i.e. shameful conduct) of noble people is a sin.' High-class people ought to practise high virtues. Noblesse oblige!

לאמים therefore means 'prominent people', 'wealthy people'. 'Wealthy people' are in the eyes of the Psalmist mostly 'wicked people'. They are his enemies. לאמים in Psalm 7, v. 8 is therefore identical with צוררי in v. 7. עדת לאמים is therefore parallel with עברות צוררי.

8. The question to be answered now is: what is the meaning of עברות? 'Lift up Thyself against the rage of mine enemies' (for הנשא בעברות צוררי) is unsatisfactory; cf.

[1] About the whole Psalm see later.

Baethgen, *op. cit.*, p. 17. Budde reads בעבור; see Gunkel, *op. cit.*, pp. 23 and 26. But nothing warrants this emendation, and it does not improve the sense of the verse. I suggest that עברות here means 'overflows', 'overflowings', 'overflowing multitudes', then simply 'multitudes'. עברה means 'overflow' in עברת זדון in Proverbs ch. 21, v. 24. Cf. also Isaiah ch. 16, v. 6; Jeremiah ch. 48, v. 30. In Job ch. 40, v. 11 עברות אפך means 'the overflowings of thine anger'. In this verse (Psalm 7, v. 7) 'overflowings' means 'overflowing multitudes', or, simply, 'multitudes'. The Psalmist prays to God: 'Lift up Thyself in the overflowing multitudes of mine enemies.' Parallel to הנשא בעברות צוררי are the words ועדת לאמים תסובבך 'and the congregation of the (wicked, prominent) people compasseth thee about' (v. 8[a]). The idea is: God has come down to look at the wicked people, the enemies of the righteous poor. And now the Psalmist asks God that He may rise out of their midst and return to the height and (sit on the throne of judgement and) do judgement. שובה 'return' is therefore right. The emendation into שֵׁבָה 'sit' (see Gunkel, *op. cit.*, pp. 23 and 26) is unnecessary. קומה ה' באפך (v. 7[a]) is the general appeal of the Psalmist to God. הנשא בעברות צוררי ועורה אלי משפט צויתה (v. 7[b, c]) is parallel to ועדת לאמים תסובבך ועליה למרום שובה (v. 8). The sense is excellent.

In v. 9, too, עמים does not mean 'nations', but 'people', especially in the sense of 'lords of the land'. See my article in the *Journal of Theological Studies*, April, 1929, p. 246. Cf. also Genesis ch. 25, vv. 8, 17; ch. 35, v. 29; ch. 49, v. 33; ch. 17, v. 14, and *passim*. In Genesis ch. 28, v. 3 and ch. 48, v. 4, קהל עמים has the same meaning as קהל גוים in Genesis ch. 35, v. 11 and המון גוים in ch. 17, v. 5. Cf. also Genesis ch. 49, v. 10 and Deuteronomy ch. 33, v. 19.

The judgement spoken of in Psalm 7, vv. 7–12 is therefore not a world-judgement, but a judgement of the wicked people (of prominence), who are the enemies of the righteous poor and, therefore, of the Psalmist. The same is true of

Psalm 9, vv. 5–9. In these verses, too, not a world-judgement ('das Weltgericht an den Heiden', Gunkel, *op. cit.*, p. 34) is thought of, but the judgement of the wealthy and wicked enemies of the righteous poor.[1] In Psalm 9, v. 9 לאמים has the same meaning as לאמים has in Psalm 7, v. 8.

9. But what about תבל in Psalm 9, v. 9[a]? Does not תבל mean 'the world'? My answer is: תבל does not mean here (and in some other passages in the Bible) 'the world', but 'the land'. תבל is synonymous with ארץ, and as ארץ means sometimes 'earth' and sometimes 'land', so does תבל mean sometimes 'earth' ('world') and sometimes 'land' ('country', 'soil'). For the etymology of תבל see Gesenius-Brown's *Lexicon*, p. 385, and Gesenius' *HWB.*, 17th ed. p. 870. In Assyrian *tabalu* means 'land' as contrasted with 'river', 'dry land'; see Muss-Arnolt, *A concise Dictionary of the Assyrian Language*, p. 1144. There cannot be any doubt that in Isaiah ch. 24, v. 4 תבל means 'the land' and not 'the world'. The whole chapter speaks of 'the land' (of Palestine). In vv. 1–15 ארץ (or הארץ) occurs no less than nine times. In v. 4 תבל is parallel with הארץ; cf. also in that verse ברום עם הארץ, and see my article in the *Journal of Theological Studies*, 1929, p. 247. In Isaiah ch. 13, v. 11 תבל means 'the land' (of Babylonia). Cf. הארץ in v. 9. In v. 11 רשעים is parallel with תבל. In Isaiah ch. 18, v. 3 תבל means 'the land'. This meaning of תבל may affect and make easier the interpretation of that difficult chapter. In Isaiah ch. 28, vv. 9 and 18 תבל means 'the land' (of Juda). In Isaiah ch. 27, v. 6 תבל means 'the land' (of Palestine). In Lamentations ch. 4, v. 12 תבל means 'the land' (of Palestine). We shall see later that there are more passages in the Bible in which תבל means 'the land' and not 'the world'.[2] But it will suffice now to have shown that in several

[1] The same applies to Psalm 56, v. 8 and Psalm 59, vv. 6, 9; see later.

[2] So, e.g., Psalm 33, v. 8; Psalm 96, v. 13; Psalm 98, v. 9; see also Job ch. 18, v. 18.

passages תבל has, without doubt, the meaning of 'the land'. This meaning תבל has in Psalm 9, v. 8. The Psalmist is concerned with his land. Cf. Psalm 10, v. 16: ה' מלך עולם ועד אבדו גוים מארצו 'The Lord is king for ever and ever; the (wicked) noblemen are perished out of His land.' The judgement in Psalm 9 is therefore also the judgement of individuals, of wicked people in the land of the Psalmist. Psalms 7, 9, and 10 are entirely individual Psalms.

10. Psalms 3, 5 and 6 do not call for any special comments. They are individual Psalms. In Psalms 3 and 5 the Psalmist prays against his enemies. In Psalm 6 the Psalmist also speaks of his enemies. The general meaning of these three Psalms becomes clear through the above expositions. In a later part of these 'Studies' I hope to deal with the terms שוררי and פעלי און, הוללים. רבבות עם (Psalm 3, v. 6) designates the same people as are described by גוים, לאמים, עמים.

Psalm 4 has been dealt with above (pp. 10–13).

We shall now turn our attention to Psalm 2.

IV

A NEW INTERPRETATION OF PSALM 2

1. *Psalm 2* has been hedged round with difficulties. Some commentators take this Psalm to be Messianic (Delitzsch, Briggs), others regard it as historical (Baethgen, Gunkel), others, again, look upon it as historical and Messianic (Kittel). The chief difficulty lies in the world-dominion of Juda (or even Israel), of which Psalm 2 is supposed to speak. It would take up too much space to enumerate all the difficulties which the commentators find in this Psalm. It will be sufficient to refer to a few observations by Gunkel. In his Commentary on the Psalms, p. 5, Gunkel, commenting on vv. 1–3, says:[1] 'The first lines speak of a just commencing rebellion of the nations, of the princes of the earth.' On p. 8 he says: 'The Israelitish king—these are the essential contents of the Psalm—claims *world-dominion*. Similar descriptions we find also elsewhere: Psalm 18, vv. 44–8; Psalm 72, vv. 8–11; cf. also Psalm 45, vv. 13 and 17; Psalm 110, v. 5 f., and "Einleitung",[2] § 5, 21. Now it is indeed not easy to understand how it could have come to such an assertion (of world-dominion)—it surely stands in the strongest contrast with the reality, in which Israel and, moreover, Juda meant so little at all times in the great entirety of the world-history; even David has never in the remotest possessed or even aspired to a world-empire.' Gunkel goes on to say that this idea (of world-dominion) was a hope of the prophets, blended with religious ideals. He sees therefore in this Psalm a combination of two ideas. 'According to one idea the subjugation of the heathen belongs already to the past; according to the other idea this is

[1] I give his words in English translation.

[2] H. Gunkel, *Einleitung in die Psalmen* (1. Hälfte), Göttingen, 1928.

to be expected in the future. The first idea could perhaps be interpreted to refer to the Messiah, but not the second one, because this (Messiah) appears now in the fulness of his power. The wavering between these two conceptions explains itself completely if (we take it that) the highest hopes are placed here in the lap of the reigning king (and assume that) the singer now completely ignores the reality, now—at least to a certain extent—pays regard to it' (p. 9). Gunkel then asks: 'But how can such extravagant hopes have at all arisen?' And he gives the answer that the idea of world-dominion did not originate in small Israel, not to speak of Juda, but in the great empires of those times. The Egyptian, Babylonian-Assyrian, and later the Persian kings allowed themselves to be celebrated as the masters of the world. 'The ideal of world-dominion will have penetrated into Israel from these world-states.' 'This origin of the Israelitish royal Psalms ("Königsgedichte") from foreign lands becomes especially clear from the beginning of Psalm 2; because such a rebellion of a whole world one has indeed never experienced in Israel or Juda, for the simple reason that their capitals have never been the seats of a world-empire.' Such rebellions happened frequently in the world-states. And when the despot fell the whole empire shook, and the nations that had been subjected endeavoured to gain their freedom. See Gunkel, *loc. cit.* Gunkel then adds: 'It thus shows itself just here how an Israelitish royal Psalm becomes alive as soon as one assumes the origin of its fundamental motive from foreign lands ("sobald man die Herkunft seines Grundmotivs aus der Fremde annimmt"). Later, on the same page, Gunkel says: 'Whether this highly exaggerated picture ("dies ganz ins Riesenhafte gemalte Bild")—of Psalm 2—has altogether any support in reality, it is impossible to say.' A few sentences may also be quoted from Briggs's *Commentary on the Book of Psalms*. On p. 12 Briggs says: 'The Psalmist describes an ideal situation, in the universal dominion of the monarch and the vain plotting of the

nations. Such a situation never emerged in the history of Israel before the exile, in David and his successors; or subsequent to the exile, in the Greek kings of Palestine or the Maccabean princes. The situation is rather that of the Assyrian and Babylonian world-powers, against which there was continual vain rebellion, according to the Hebrew prophets, and the cuneiform monuments of these kings. The same world-wide dominion was held by Persia and Alexander, but there was not the same situation of plotting and rebellion. It is probable that the poet idealizes the dynasty of David into just such a world-power as Assyria or Babylonia, and that he wrote during the supremacy of one of them.' See also further on pp. 12 and 13. On p. 14, commenting on vv. 1–3, Briggs says that the Psalmist conceives 'of the king anointed by Him as ruling over the kings of the earth'. 'His kingdom is world-wide, cf. Psalm 89, v. 28. The nations, like those subjected by the world-power Babylon, are impatient of this dominion, and accordingly they secretly plot together to throw it off.'

I submit that there is not a trace of world-dominion to be found in this Psalm, and that, indeed, no foreign nations and no foreign kings are mentioned in it. Psalm 2 is, in my opinion, entirely Jewish, that is, it deals only with the land and the people of the Psalmist. And I suggest the following interpretation for Psalm 2.

V. 1. The words גוים and לאמים in v. 1 have the same meaning as these words have in Psalms 7, 9 and 10 (see above, pp. 14–16 and 27–32), namely, '(haughty) prominent men', '(wicked) nobles', '(overbearing) lords'. They are nobles of Juda and Israel. רגשו is to be compared with רגשה, which is used in Psalm 64, v. 3[b] in connexion with פעלי און 'workers of iniquity', and means 'they murmur'; see also Gunkel, *op. cit.*, p. 10. They who murmur are individuals, not nations. (ריק) יהגו is to be compared with יהגה in Psalm 1, v. 2, though its shade of meaning is somewhat different.

יהגו means 'they utter (speak, whisperingly).' See for the various meanings of הגה Gesenius-Brown's *Lexicon*, p. 211; see also Gunkel, *loc. cit.*

2. *V. 2.* מלכי ארץ are 'the kings of the land' (of Palestine) and not of 'the earth'. That ארץ means in many passages in the Bible '*the* land' (of Canaan, of Juda and Israel, of Palestine) is well known; see Dictionaries. Cf. also Isaiah, ch. 24; Psalm 37, vv. 9, 11, 22, 29, 34; Psalm 44, v. 4; cf. also above, p. 34. כל הארץ in Psalm 45, v. 17, also means 'the whole land (of Palestine)', not 'the whole earth'. That verse is therefore to be translated: 'Instead of thy fathers shall be thy sons; thou shalt make them princes in all the land.' In Psalm 76, v. 13 מלכי ארץ means 'the kings of the land' and not 'of the earth' (as it is usually translated). The parallel word נגידים also refers to princes of the land. In Psalm 82, v. 8 הארץ means 'the land'. The translation of v. 8 would be: 'Arise, O God, judge the land, for Thou shalt inherit (the land) among all the (wicked) nobles (the landowners).' The difficulties which commentators find in this verse (see Gunkel, *op. cit.*, p. 363) disappear.[1] In Psalm 89, v. 28[2] מלכי ארץ are 'the kings of the land'. The anointed of God will be 'the highest of the kings of the land' (עליון למלכי ארץ). In Psalm 100, v. 1 כל הארץ means 'all the land'. In Psalm 110, v. 5 מלכים means 'kings of the land'. In Psalm 119, v. 64 הארץ is 'the land' of the Psalmist; see also בארץ in v. 87. In v. 119 כל רשעי ארץ are 'all the wicked of the land' (not 'of the earth'). The term כל רשעי ארץ is parallel to זדים, רשעים, בגדים, רדפי זמה, רדפי וצרי. In v. 161 שרים are the (wicked) princes of the land. In Psalm 138, v. 4 כל מלכי ארץ are 'all the kings of the land' and not 'of the

[1] I hope to deal fully with this Psalm and the other Psalms mentioned here in the later parts of these 'Studies'.

[2] This verse is referred to by Gunkel as supporting the idea that the Israelitish king claimed world-dominion; see Gunkel, *op. cit.*, p. 8. On Psalm 18, vv. 44–8, and Psalm 72, vv. 8–11 (cf. Gunkel, *loc. cit.*) see later.

earth'. The Psalmist speaks of the holy temple and of his own land. In Psalm 148, v. 11 מלכי ארץ are 'the kings of the land', and כל שפטי ארץ are 'all the judges of the land'. The same applies to מלכיהם in Psalm 149, v. 8; see above, p. 32. Just as in Psalm 148, v. 11 מלכי ארץ are parallel to שרים and לאמים to שפטי ארץ and in Psalm 149, v. 8 מלכיהם are parallel to נכבדיהם, so are in Psalm 2 מלכי ארץ parallel to גוים and רוזנים to לאמים.

In Judges ch. 5, v. 3 מלכים and רוזנים are mentioned together. There, too, מלכים and רוזנים are 'kings' and 'princes' of the land. In Isaiah ch. 40, v. 23 רוזנים are parallel to שפטי ארץ. Cf. also Habakkuk ch. 1, v. 10; Proverbs ch. 8, v. 15. In Proverbs ch. 8, v. 16 there are mentioned together שפטי צדק and נדיבים, שרים. In Proverbs ch. 31, v. 4 מלכים are parallel to רוזנים. Cf. also Proverbs ch. 14, v. 28. In Job ch. 34, v. 18 מלך is parallel to נדיבים, and in v. 19 שוע is parallel to שרים.

מלך does not always mean 'a king of a country'. מלך sometimes means 'a king of a town', 'a ruler of a small district'. Cf. Joshua ch. 12, vv. 7–24. All those kinglets are called in v. 7 מלכי הארץ 'the kings of the land'. Cf. also Judges ch. 1, v. 7 (seventy kings!). In fact, מלך has often the meaning of 'a prince', 'a great noble'; cf. above, p. 29.

In Psalm 2 the Psalmist speaks of the princes and nobles in the land—some of whom had great authority in their districts—who refused to pay homage to the king in Zion. The lords refused obedience to the sovereign lord. It is presumed that they are wicked and that they also refuse to obey God. The king of Zion was the anointed of God. They, the princes and nobles, took a stand [1] against God and His anointed. They want to break asunder the bands of God and of His king (v. 3). We will see later what this breaking of the bands means. But He that sitteth in heaven laughs at them (v. 4). Where does this

[1] יתיצבו gives a good sense; there is no need to emend it into יתיעצו.

phrase (of v. 4) occur again? In Psalm 37, v. 13 and in Psalm 59, v. 9. Does this phrase in Psalms 37 and 59 refer to nations? Gunkel seems to imply this, at any rate for Psalm 59; see *op. cit.*, p. 6, also p. 252 ('du spottest aller Heiden!'). But this is not so. In Psalm 37, v. 13 the wicked individual (רשע, v. 12) is thought of. אדני ישחק לו 'The Lord laugheth at him', namely, at the wicked man. But in Psalm 59, too, the phrase is used with regard to individuals. The Psalmist prays to God against his enemies; cf. v. 2. In v. 3 his enemies are called פעלי און, אנשי דמים; in v. 4— . In v. 6 they are called כל הגוים, כל בוגדי און. Gunkel translates כל הגוים in v. 6 by 'alle die Heiden' and לכל גוים in v. 9 by 'aller Heiden'. This is obviously impossible. Kittel (*op. cit.*, p. 224) translates 'alle Hoffärtigen' and emends, with Duhm, גוים into נאים, 'as everything (in Psalm 59) points to inner-Jewish conditions' (p. 225). This emendation is unnecessary. כל הגוים here means 'all the wicked nobles', 'all the wicked landed proprietors'. ואתה ה' תשחק למו תלעג לכל גוים 'And Thou, O Lord, shalt laugh at them; Thou shalt have all the nobles in derision' refers therefore to haughty, wicked nobles in Israel. In Psalm 2, v. 4 we have the same picture and the same verbs (לעג and שחק). As in Psalm 59, so in Psalm 2 the people at whom God laughs are wicked nobles and princes in Israel.

Vv. 5–6. אז does not mean 'einst' (once), in the future (see Gunkel, *op. cit.*, pp. 5 and 11), but simply 'then'. God speaks to them angrily (v. 5). What God speaks is contained in v. 6: 'And I have set my king upon Zion, my holy mountain'. 'And' expresses the emphasis: 'Surely, *I* have made him king in Zion.'[1] These words are

[1] The suggestions made, or approved, by Gunkel (*op. cit.*, p. 11) as to the reading and meaning of this verse cannot even be considered. The words in v. 6 are spoken by God. The wrath which Duhm and Gunkel miss in the verse is felt in וְאֲנִי '*And* I'. Through וְ the whole word ואני becomes emphatic and expresses anger.

sufficient. God made His anointed king in Zion. The whole land should obey him, and all the princes and judges should think of the king on the holy mount of Zion.

3. *Vv. 7–9.* In vv. 7–9 the king speaks. V. 7[a] (אספרה אל חק ה׳) has offered difficulties; see Gunkel, *op. cit.*, p. 11. Gunkel suggests the reading of אִסְפְּךָ אֶל־חֻקִּי (basing this reading upon a similar emendation proposed by Torczyner) and regards these words as a variant of בני אתה in 7[b]. ‘חֻקִּי ist als חק ה׳ missverstanden’, he says. See his translation of the verse, *ibid.*, p. 5. I submit that the reading of the Massoretic text is correct, and that the words אספרה אל חק ה׳ are an important element in the Psalm. I translate these words as follows: ‘I will declare the law of the Lord.’ חק and ה׳ are to be taken together (see Baethgen, *op. cit.*, p. 6; note also the translation of the Septuagint: τὸ *πρόσταγμα κυρίου*). But, I suggest, חק does not refer to the words בני אתה אני היום ילדתיך as constituting ‘the decree’ of the Lord (so most commentators),[1] but means, together with ה׳, ‘the law of the Lord’. The king says that he will declare the law of the Lord.

In Psalm 45, v. 8 the Psalmist says: אהבת צדק ותשנא רשע על־כן משחך אלהים אלהיך שמן ששון מחברך ‘Thou hast loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.’[2] The reason for the king being king is his love of righteousness. In Psalm 89 David is anointed king, it is presumed, because he loves justice and keeps the laws of God. He calls God his father (v. 27), and God makes him His firstborn (v. 28). The covenant (between God and David) will stand fast (v. 29), and his seed will endure for ever—on the throne—(v. 30). Then the Psalmist says

[1] The Revised Version translates verse 7: ‘I will tell of the decree: the Lord said unto me, Thou art my son; this day have I begotten thee.’

[2] The emendations proposed by Gunkel in this verse (*op. cit.*, p. 194; see also his translation on p. 189) are against the spirit of the Hebrew language. I hope to deal with this Psalm fully in the later parts of these ‘Studies’.

(vv. 31–33): אם־יעזבו בניו תורתי ובמשפטי לא ילכון: אם־חקתי יחללו ומצותי לא ישמרו: ופקדתי בשבט פשעם ובנגעים עונם. 'If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgements; if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes.' Although God will not break off His mercy from David (v. 34) and will not profane His covenant (v. 35), it is the keeping of the law and the commandments of God which is in fact the basis of the covenant between God and David. The king is to be the guardian of the law of God.

There is no need to bring many instances to show the meaning of חק. A few references will suffice. Cf. Exodus ch. 18, v. 16: כי־יהיה להם דבר בא אלי ושפטתי בין איש ובין רעהו והודעתי את־חקי האלהים ואת־תורתיו 'When they have a matter, it cometh unto me; and I judge between a man and his neighbour, and I make them know the statutes of God and His laws.' Cf. Amos ch. 2, v. 4; Psalm 81, v. 5; Psalm 105, v. 45. Cf. also Psalm 119, vv. 12–13: ברוך אתה ה' למדני חקיך בשפתי ספרתי כל משפטי פיך 'Blessed art Thou, O Lord; teach me Thy statutes. With my lips have I declared all the judgements of Thy mouth.' Cf. also Ezra 7, v. 10: כי עזרא הכין לבבו לדרש את תורת ה' ולעשות וללמד בישראל חק ומשפט 'For Ezra had set his heart to seek the law of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and ordinances (or, law and judgement).'[1] Of special importance is Psalm 50, v. 16: ולרשע אמר אלהים מה־לך לספר חקי ותשא בריתי עלי־פיך 'But unto the wicked God saith: What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, and that thou hast taken my covenant in thy mouth?' In this verse we have חק together with the verb ספר—a good parallel to אספרה אל חק ה'. Note also ספר with משפט in Psalm 119, v. 13.

4. But is not אֵל a hindrance to the interpretation proposed

[1] For חק as meaning 'law in general' see Gesenius-Brown's *Lexicon*, p. 349.

here for אספרה אל חק ה׳? Well, I suggest that in some passages in the Bible אֶל has the same meaning as אֵת—mark of the accusative. This meaning אֶל has, no doubt, in Psalm 69, v. 27ᵇ: ואל מכאוב חלליך יספרו 'And they tell of (relate, proclaim) the pain of those whom Thou hast wounded' gives good sense. The wicked enemies gloat over the misfortunes of the poor. The emendations suggested by Baethgen (*op. cit.*, p. 217), Gunkel, and others (see Gunkel, *op. cit.*, p. 299) do not improve the verse. 'To tell' in the meaning of 'to gloat over' gives the best sense. In Isaiah ch. 38, v. 19 אֶל has the meaning of את. אב לבנים יודיע אֶל אמתך 'The father to the children shall make known Thy truth.' In Jeremiah ch. 10, v. 2 (אֶל־דרך הגוים אַל־תלמדו) אֶל has the meaning of את. In 1 Samuel ch. 14, v. 34 (ולא־תחטאו לה׳ לאכל אֶל־הדם) אֶל has the meaning of את.[1] Cf. Leviticus ch. 17, v. 10: ונתתי פני בנפש האכלת את־הדם. In Judges ch. 7, v. 25 אֶל is used instead of אֵת (וירדפו אֶל־מדין). Indeed, if לְ can denote the object of a verb,[2] why should not אֶל have the same function? And, after all, does not אֵת (or אֶת) really mean 'with'? If 'with' can be used as denoting the object, 'to' can be used for the same purpose.[3]

We can, therefore, without any hesitation, translate אספרה אל חק ה׳ by 'I will declare the law of the Lord'. In these few words the king says that he is a righteous king, whose greatest task is to be the guardian of the law of God, to dispense justice and to spread righteousness. This is the reason for his being the king of Zion, the anointed of God. And because he has undertaken to proclaim the law of The Lord, God said to him (אמר אלי): בני אתה אני היום ילדתיך. The idea contained in the four words אספרה אל

[1] עַל in vv. 32 and 33 has also the meaning of אֵת. On this see later.

[2] Cf. Leviticus ch. 19, v. 18: ואהבת לרעך כמוך, also v. 34, and see Gesenius-Brown's *Lexicon* p. 512, and Gesenius' *HWB.*, 17 ed., pp. 371–2.

[3] In this way the (inherently weak) twofold division of את will be unnecessary (see Gesenius-Brown's *Lexicon*, pp. 84–5, and Gesenius' *HWB.*, pp. 76–7).

חק ה׳ is important for the whole Psalm. It shows clearly that the whole Psalm is inner-Jewish and is mainly religious and not political. The bands, which the nobles and princes want to break asunder, are the bands of justice and righteousness and of the fear of God.[1] Because the king loves righteousness he can ask for the inheritance of the nobles and for the possession of 'the ends of the land'.

5. *V 8.* גוים in v. 8 are not 'nations', but, as in v. 1, the powerful men in the land, the nobles. And אפסי ארץ are not 'the ends of the earth', but the ends (all the parts) of the land. In Psalm 106 the Psalmist says (vv. 3–5): אשרי שמרי משפט עשה צדקה בכל־עת: זכרני ה׳ ברצון עמך פקדני בישועתך: לראות בטובת בחיריך לשמח בשמחת גויך להתהלל עם־נחלתך: 'Happy are they that keep justice, that do righteousness at all times. Remember me, O Lord, in the favour unto Thy people; O visit me with Thy salvation; that I may see the good of Thy chosen, that I may rejoice in the gladness of Thy nobles, that I may glory with Thine inheritance.' In v. 5 גויך are the leading men in the land who are good, who keep justice and do righteousness at all times (v. 3). גויך is parallel to בחיריך and נחלתך. In Psalm 2, v. 8 the ungodly גוים, the unrighteous nobles will become the inheritance of the king in Zion. And he will possess all the land. 'And thy possession (will be) the ends of the land.' Can אפסי ארץ mean 'the ends of the land' (and not 'of the earth')? If ארץ can mean 'the land', אפסי ארץ can mean 'the ends of the land'. Psalm 59, v. 14 proves this conclusively. Psalm 59 speaks of individual prominent men who are bad, who are 'workers of iniquity'; see above, p. 41. And in v. 14 the Psalmist says: כלה בחמה כלה ואינמו וידעו כי אלהים משל ביעקב לאפסי הארץ סלה 'Consume them in wrath, consume them, that they be no more; and let them know that God ruleth in Jacob, unto the ends of the land.' It is

[1] The emendations of Gunkel and Torczyner (see above) would rob the Psalm of the central idea.

clear that לאפסי הארץ following upon משל ביעקב cannot mean 'to the ends of the earth'. It is only the view that the Psalmist (in Psalm 59) speaks against the heathen which forced the commentators to assume that לאפסי הארץ means 'to the ends of the earth'.[1] In accordance with my interpretation of גוים in Psalm 59 לאפסי הארץ clearly means 'to the ends of the land'. לאפסי הארץ defines and strengthens the word ביעקב.[2] כל אפסי ארץ in Psalm 67, v. 8 has the same meaning as אפסי ארץ in Psalm 59, v. 14.

5. *V. 9.* I suggest that the words in v. 9 are not spoken by God to the king (see commentaries), but that they are addressed by the king to God. In Psalm 89, v. 33 it is God who says ופקדתי בשבט פשעם ובנגעים עונם. See also 2 Samuel, ch. 7, v. Cf. 14[b]. also Psalm 44, v. 3[b]: תרע לאמים ותשלחם. Cf. also Psalm 59, v. 14; Psalm 69, v. 25. It is therefore God who punishes the wicked princes and nobles with the rod or breaks them and causes them to perish. The words spoken by God to the king are from בני אתה till אפסי ארץ. In v. 9 the king speaks and addresses his words to God.

Vv. 10–12. In vv. 10–12 the Psalmist speaks again. He tells the kings (princes) to be wise and the judges to be admonished (v. 10). In v. 11 he tells them to serve the Lord with fear and to rejoice with trembling. Whether גיל here means 'rejoice' or 'tremble' (see Gesenius-Brown's *Lexicon* p. 162), it refers to worshipping God. The observations of Gunkel (*op. cit.*, pp. 11–12) and Kittel (*op. cit.*, p. 8) and the emendations proposed (see also Gesenius' *HWB.*, 17th ed., p. 113) are entirely unjustified. Is נשקו ברגליו Hebrew?

[1] See the emergency suggestion regarding מֹשֵׁל in Gunkel's Commentary, p. 255.

[2] It may be that the meaning of the words כי אלהים משל ביעקב לאפסי הארץ is 'that God ruleth in Jacob the ends of the land (the whole land).' Cf. Jeremiah ch. 33, v. 26: משלים אל־זרע אברהם ישחק ויעקב.

6. The meaning of נשקו בר is now, I submit, clear. We have seen that the tenor of Psalm 2 is religious, moral, and not political. The theme of this Psalm is righteousness as represented by the king of Zion, who is king of Zion because he dispenses justice and is the guardian and proclaimer of the law of God. The princes and judges of the land are admonished by the Psalmist to serve the Lord and to fear Him and, consequently, to be righteous and just. בר must therefore mean 'pure'. And נשקו בר means 'worship', or, 'do homage, in purity'. It may also be that we should read בֹּר instead of בַּר. In 2 Samuel ch. 22, v. 25 בָּרִי 'my purity' is used parallel with צִדְקָתִי (cf. also v. 21, and Psalm 18, vv. 21 and 25). Then נשקו בר would mean 'kiss purity', that is 'observe purity', 'do what is pure and just'. It is interesting to note that in the Talmud (*Sanhedrin*, 91^{b}) בר in Psalm 2, v. 12 is understood to mean 'the Torah': ואין בר אלא תורה שנאמר נשקו בר. Cf. also Baethgen, *op. cit.*, p. 7. But whether נשקו בר means 'kiss purity' or 'worship in purity' (which appears more likely, as this phrase follows upon עבדו את ה׳ ביראה וגילו ברעדה), the general sense is the same: by serving God they will be righteous. The meaning of 'son' for בר must be entirely ruled out, as it is not the king who is of real importance in this Psalm, but God, Whose law the king proclaims and Whose righteousness the king practices.[1] The translation of v. 12 is therefore: 'Worship (or, do homage)

[1] In Psalm 45 v. 7 refers to God and not to the king (see for the latter view Delitzsch, *op. cit.*, pp. 338–9; Kittel, *op. cit.*, p. 175; Gunkel, *op. cit.*, p. 194; see also Baethgen, *op. cit.*, 131–2). God is addressed by the Psalmist in the whole verse. V. 7 is the foundation for v. 8. 'Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; a sceptre of equity is the sceptre of Thy kingdom' (v. 7). The king follows the example of God and loves righteousness. 'Thou hast loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows' (v. 8).' The Psalmist often makes such rapid changes in his speech. A gesture, a lifting up of the eyes was sufficient to indicate what the Psalmist meant. In Psalm 2 the Psalmist speaks in vv. 1–5, God in v. 6, the king in vv. 7–9 (quoting the words of God in v. 7^{b} and v. 8, and addressing himself to God in v. 9), and in vv. 10–12 again the Psalmist speaks.

in purity (or, kiss purity), lest He be angry, and ye lose the way, for kindled soon is His wrath. Happy are all they that take their refuge in Him.' Cf. ודרך רשעים with ותאבדו דרך תאבר in Psalm 1, v. 6. Cf. אשרי כל חוסי בו with וישמחו כל חוסי בך in Psalm 5, v. 12. Cf. also Psalm 21, v. 8 (כי המלך בוטח בה').

7. We thus see that there are points of contact between Psalm 1 and Psalm 2. The chief point of contact is the theme. In both Psalms the law of God and righteousness are exalted. In Psalm 1 the righteous man is an ordinary individual, and in Psalm 2 the righteous man is the king in Zion. In Psalm 1 the wicked are ordinary men; in Psalm 2 the wicked are the nobles and the princes. In Psalm 1 the ordinary righteous man delights in the law of God; in Psalm 2 the king proclaims the law of God. The Rabbinic tradition that Psalm 1 and Psalm 2 really form one whole is therefore well founded. See *Berachoth*, 9^{b}: אשרי האיש ולמה רגשו גוים חדא פרשה היא. The objections of Delitzsch (*op. cit.*, p. 66), Baethgen (*op. cit.*, p. 4), Kittel (*op. cit.*, p. 1), and Gunkel (*op. cit.*, p. 10), based on the alleged great difference between Psalm 1—in which sinners and righteous in Israel are spoken of—and Psalm 2—in which the Psalmist is supposed to speak of the nations of the world and of the world-dominion of Israel, or Juda—[1] disappear entirely according to the interpretation of Psalm 2 given here. Psalm 1 and Psalm 2 together form the right prologue to the Book of Psalms: the ordinary people and the nobles should be good and God-fearing. Ancient preachers (see Briggs, *op. cit.*, p. 13 bottom and p. 14 top) made Midrashic use of Psalm 2 for their homiletical purposes. But the plain meaning of the Psalm is now perfectly clear.

[1] Gunkel, *loc. cit.*, says: 'Davon, dass er (Psalm 2) etwa mit Psalm 1 ursprünglich zusammengehöre, kann bei ihrer grossen Verschiedenartigkeit keine Rede sein.' Cf. also Baethgen, *loc. cit.*: 'Denn während Psalm 1 die Spötter in Israel an der Spitze der Sünder stehen, hat Psalm 2 es mit den Völkern der Welt zu tun.'

8. I give now the translation of the whole Psalm.

PSALM 2.

The Psalmist.

1. Why do the nobles murmur, and the lords utter vain things[1]?

2. The kings[2] of the land set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord and against His anointed:

3. 'Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.'

4. He that sitteth in heaven laugheth, the Lord hath them in derision.

5. Then He speaketh unto them in His wrath, and dismayeth them in His anger:

6. 'And[3] I have set my king upon Zion, My holy mountain.'

The King.

7. 'I will declare the law of the Lord.
He said unto me:
"Thou art my son;
this day have I begotten thee.

8. Ask of me, and I will give (thee) the nobles for thine inheritance,
and the ends of the land[4] for thy possession".

9. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron;
Like a potter's vessel Thou shalt shatter them'.

The Psalmist.

10. And now, ye kings, be wise; be admonished, ye judges of the land.

[1] 'Vain things' is more expressive of the meaning of ריק than 'a vain thing' or 'emptiness'. 'In vain'—the American Jewish Translation—(Gunkel: 'vergebens') misses the point.

[2] In the sense of 'princes'.

[3] In the sense of 'surely'. The ו expresses emphasis; see above, p. 41.

[4] That is, 'the whole land'.

11. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling;

12. Worship[1] in purity,[2] lest He be angry, and ye lose the way,

for kindled soon is His wrath.

Happy are all they that take their refuge in Him.

An appropriate heading for this Psalm would be: 'The great ones in the land, too, should be righteous.'

I will now close this essay. Psalms 1–15 seem to me to have a unity of their own. These fifteen Psalms are similar to each other in contents, style, and workmanship. They have a colouring of their own. They have many features in common, which distinguish them from the other Psalms that deal with the same subject. Even Psalm 13 has, through v. 3^b and v. 5, its rightful place in this group. Psalm 15 seems to be the fitting epilogue of the group comprising the first fifteen Psalms.

[1] Or, 'Do homage'.
[2] Or, 'Kiss purity' (i.e. 'Observe purity').

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